

no way to defend what happened. At best, it was gross negligence; at worst, it was murder.

This has been happening too often in the United States. I support police. My first job out of law school was an attorney for the police department. I worked 3½ years for the police. I understand their importance, and I support them. But police who are not well trained are doing a disservice to their profession and to the United States.

This morning on “Morning Joe,” former Congressman Joe Scarborough, a Republican Member of this House, said two things are necessary in light of the shootings, and particularly the Crutcher shooting in Tulsa, Oklahoma. One is body cameras and cameras on all police vehicles so we can see, as we did in Oklahoma, exactly what occurred. And, secondly, independent prosecutors, prosecutors from outside the jurisdiction to see to it that justice is served.

There is a bill in this Congress that LACY CLAY, myself, every member of the Congressional Black Caucus, and nearly 90 Members of this House are cosponsors of. That is a bill that will require police training towards racial sensitivity and understanding of different cultures, independent prosecutors for States to determine how they would set it up, and a requirement for States to have independent prosecutors in law enforcement killings of American citizens. This is necessary for people to believe and to know that justice is, indeed, blind and justice is being meted out.

There is no way to look at Tulsa, but to see there was either inadequate training or there was racial profiling and insensitivity that ended in the death of Mr. Crutcher.

It is so sad as we open the National Museum of African American History and Culture to see that African Americans still are not being treated the same as others in our Nation.

It is not a mere coincidence that every shooting by a police person videoed has an African American victim. Nobody can say that Mr. Crutcher was resisting arrest or possibly had a gun or brandished a pistol. None of those things occurred. He was following instructions.

I ask my Republican colleagues, none of whom are sponsors of my bill, to consider coming on to the bill. The bill is important for justice in America. It is important for people to know there is justice. And in this week, as we look to the National Museum of African American History and Culture opening and the recognition of rights that people have, and the understanding that they are human beings and part of America, who built America, literally built America as slaves and built this building, we need to go forward and see to it that justice is colorblind and justice is meted out.

CHANGING OUR BROKEN SYSTEM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RIBBLE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RIBBLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about embarrassment.

Next week, the Congress of the United States will once again have to refer on and go back to funding our Federal Government with an ad hoc continuing resolution. Federal law requires the Congress of the United States to pass a budget each year. It requires the Congress of the United States to pass 12 appropriations bills each year by September 30, which is coming up next week.

I came to Congress in 2011, Mr. Speaker. Since then, we have passed zero regular order appropriations out of the 72 required by law—zero. And yet, we have been able to find some way to pass 20 short-term continuing resolution appropriations bills that have no reforms to spending, they have no reforms to policy, and we have passed five 2,000-page omnibus spending bills. Somehow we were able to do those two things, but we weren't able to pass 12 simple appropriations bills to properly manage the taxpayers' money.

I have heard it said that Americans are disappointed with Congress. In fact, I am a little surprised that we have an 18 percent approval rating right now. Maybe we have a lot of family members or some folks back home who aren't paying attention to what is going on here.

We wonder why out of the \$3.8 trillion of taxpayer dollars that we have received here in the Congress of the United States each year are not being managed correctly by the only body that can actually manage it. Why in the world aren't they fixing this problem and passing their spending bills in regular order in front of the American people where they can see it and do it instead of these ad hoc spending bills?

Mr. Speaker, each year that I have been in Congress, I have authored a bill that would change our broken system and begin to fix this system that doesn't work. I would propose to you that 0 out of 72 is not a very good batting record. It is called the Biennial Budgeting and Enhanced Oversight Act. In fact, today, it has 237 cosponsors of the majority in this House. When I introduced the bill last year, I introduced it with 108 original cosponsors that signed on with me when we introduced it.

That represents, by the way, Mr. Speaker, 50 percent of the whole House of Representatives. It represents 63 percent of the elected Republican leadership in this House. It represents 29 percent of the minority party. Fifty Democrats have joined with Republicans and said: we need to fix this broken system.

Seventy-two percent of the majority party support this reform. Sixty-eight percent of committee chairmen support this reform. Sixty-seven percent of subcommittee chairmen support this

reform. Sixty-five percent of the Republican Steering Committee, the leadership of this House of Representatives, support this reform.

It was referred to the Budget Committee where 56 percent support this reform. It was also referred to the Rules Committee where 54 percent support this reform. And yet, there has been no vote on this in the House. 237 cosponsors represent 168 million American people whose voices have been squashed and been silenced by our lack of inaction.

Mr. Speaker, I started by saying I want to talk about embarrassment. I am embarrassed for the Congress of the United States. I am proud of the effort that has been done here, and I am proud of the people and Members of Congress who have stood up to finally fix this broken system and said: enough is enough.

I am proud of Senator ENZI and Senator INHOFE over in the U.S. Senate trying to advance the same types of reforms there. But I am embarrassed for the Congress of the United States. I am embarrassed for our leadership. I am embarrassed because we haven't been able to do what is right, even though the majority of us agree that this is better than what we have, that this is a step forward.

But I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, what I am more than embarrassed about. I am disappointed. Because the only people in the country that can fix this is the Congress of the United States.

Since 1974, when the Budget Act was put in place, the Congress of the United States has failed to pass its budget and its appropriations bills required by law every single year for 42 years. They have not been able to do it on time even once. Some people will argue that this isn't the best fix and may not be the perfect fix, but I will tell you right now, Mr. Speaker, it is better than 0 out of 72 for sure.

I call on the Speaker of the House to bring this bill to the floor and let 168 million Americans finally be heard.

COLOMBIA-FARC PEACE DEAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CURBELO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, in the coming weeks, the sovereign people of Colombia will decide, in a historic referendum, whether to approve or reject the agreement reached between the Colombian Government and the terrorist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, commonly known as FARC.

I have made it a priority to hear from stakeholders on either side of this issue, and I remain concerned about the impact the deal could have on Colombia, as well as its broader effects on the region, especially given the drastic increase in coca production in recent years. My concerns are shared by many Americans of Colombian descent who

call south Florida home, and who I am proud to represent in this body.

Throughout the process, the FARC has demanded immunity, impunity, and political legitimacy, but we cannot ignore the thousands viciously murdered by this terrorist organization—people who were innocent victims and who demand justice that goes beyond special tribunals that offer relatively mild punishments.

Throughout the decades, the FARC recruited children to serve its corrupt cause. American citizens were kidnapped and victimized by them. It is hard to believe that the FARC was an honest partner in the peace process, and allowing them to participate in the political process has been viewed as a generous and perhaps dangerous concession.

The Colombian people will be voting on the deal next month after more than half a century of war. This is a decision exclusively for the Colombian people to make. However, those of us who cherish the U.S.-Colombia relationship, who care deeply for Colombia and its future, and who are privileged to represent many in our country's Colombian-American community must be sincere and, with respect, express our concerns, while at the same time renewing our commitment to the strong partnership between our two nations.

ADDRESSING THE FEDERAL DEFICIT

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss one of the most serious issues facing the United States—the staggering Federal deficit, which is expected to be one-third larger this year. According to the Congressional Budget Office, our Federal budget deficit will be \$590 billion, compared with a \$438 billion deficit last year.

Future projections don't appear to be optimistic either, with OMB reports stating that the deficit will rise to 4.6 percent of GDP by 2026. For comparison, the average deficit as a share of GDP from 1966 to 2015 was 2.8 percent. These figures make it abundantly clear that Congress must work toward solutions that will address our Nation's deficit and get our fiscal house back in order.

Every day, families in south Florida sit around the dinner table and make tough decisions on how they will spend their money. They stick to their budgets, and their government should be no different.

Last October, I was proud to support a 2-year bipartisan budget agreement that implemented new caps on discretionary spending for both fiscal years 2016 and 2017.

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Too often, enormous sums are wasted due to unpredictable budget cycles and government shutdown threats. With the adoption of this 2-year budget, Congress was able to reduce wasteful government spending by providing certainty to agencies as they plan for the future. The budget also contains real reforms to entitlement programs,

which is the largest percentage of national debt. It is important that we protect programs like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid—the invaluable safety net for those who need the help—while working to implement reforms to make these programs solvent for future generations.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to advance solutions that will reduce our Federal deficit. It is our duty as elected officials to leave our children and grandchildren with the same economic opportunities as my generation, and that is my main priority in Congress.

A "BETTER WAY" AGENDA

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the House Republicans' Better Way agenda to reform the way Congress does business by promoting solutions that will benefit Americans across the country. I am proud to have supported numerous bills within the Better Way agenda, including two education bills that are expected to pass the House this week.

The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, of which I am an original cosponsor, provides students with the tools to succeed in a variety of fields, including the technology and healthcare sectors, by simplifying the process of applying for Federal funds. This legislation also increases transparency, ensuring effective programs that allow students, teachers, and parents to attain their goals.

This year, I had the opportunity to serve on the Poverty, Opportunity, and Upward Mobility Task Force and suggested that we focus on the most vulnerable in our communities—at-risk youth. I am proud the Better Way agenda included a plan to reduce poverty for children and was proud to introduce the bipartisan Supporting Youth Opportunity and Preventing Delinquency Act. This legislation sets kids up for long-term success by giving State and local leaders the flexibility to better meet the specific needs of at-risk children in their communities.

ADDRESSING THE MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURPHY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from which I am going to read some excerpts. This includes a letter that we are sending to Majority Leader MCCONNELL and Minority Leader REID in the Senate. Let me read a few excerpts from this.

We are asking the Senate to pass the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act before the district work period break. Delays in enacting this into law will contribute to more crime, violence, homelessness, and the daily deaths of 959 Americans as a result of mental illness.

We know that there is a critical shortage of qualified providers. There are only 9,000 child and adolescent psychiatrists for 17 million children, and we need 30,000. African Americans are half as likely to receive psychiatric care, and for Hispanics with a mental disorder, fewer than 1 in 11 sees a mental health specialist. Fifty-five percent of counties in America do not have a practicing psychiatrist, psychologist, or social worker.

The average time between the onset of the first symptoms of psychosis and the first treatment is 80 weeks. There is a nationwide shortage of 100,000 psychiatric beds, which means people are often diverted to jails, are boarded in emergency rooms, or are released without treatment. There is no oversight, monitoring, or enforcement of the 10-year-old parity law, and persons with eating disorders still cannot get coverage for their treatment.

The Federal Government spends about \$130 billion annually by 112 agencies across eight separate departments, but the GAO exposed that these have nearly no coordination and do not require evidence-based practices.

In terms of violence, those with untreated psychosis are 15 times more likely to be violent or not in treatment. With regard to jail, over 50 percent of those in jail have a mental illness. Mentally ill inmates cost taxpayers three times more than those without a mental illness, and individuals with a mental illness are four to six times more likely to be victims of sexual violence.

With regard to homelessness, over one-third of homeless Americans have a serious mental illness, and people with serious mental illness are three times more likely to be in poverty.

Having a serious mental illness is worse for someone's health than is chronic heavy smoking, and those with serious mental illness tend to die 10 to 25 years prematurely, meaning over 350,000 Americans will die this year as a direct or indirect result of mental illness. So far this year, over 255,000 have died.

H.R. 2646, the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act, is the most transformational crisis mental health reform bill in 50 years. It passed the House with near unanimous support on July 16, 2016, with a vote of 422-2.

It reforms the Federal Government approach to mental health by establishing the critically important leadership position of Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders, who must be a doctor and who will bring accountability, effectiveness, and coordination to the Federal Government's programs and will develop a national strategy to increase the mental health workforce.

It increases the number of psychiatrists, psychologists, and psychiatric nurses to treat serious mental illness. It provides funding for tele-mental health to increase access in underserved areas. It provides additional